

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: SHUM, CI
SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS PROGRAM UNDER SECTION 116 (E) OF THE
FOREIGN ASSISTANCE ACT/CENTER FOR LAW AND SOCIAL POLICY

REF: STATE 193756

1. BARRING A SHARP DETERIORATION IN US/CHILEAN RELATIONS,
THIS EMBASSY WELCOMES A VISIT BY LEONARD MEEKER AS PRO-
POSED IN REFTEL. WE DO, HOWEVER, HAVE SUBSTANTIAL UN-
CERTAINTIES WHETHER CHILE WILL PROVE TO BE A GOOD PLACE
FOR SETTING-UP THE TYPE OF PROGRAM THE CENTER FOR LAW
AND SOCIAL POLICY IS NOW DISCUSSING WITH AID.

2. IT SEEMS TO US THAT SECTION 116 (E) OF THE FOREIGN
ASSISTANCE ACT CONTAINS A BASIC MISPERCEPTION OF LATIN
AMERICAN SOCIO/POLITICAL LIFE. EXCEPT FOR SOME CHURCH OFFICIALS,
IT IS VERY HARD TO FIND ANYONE ENGAGED IN POLITICAL
AND CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITIES WHO IS NOT HIMSELF INTENSELY
POLITICAL IN A PARTISAN MANNER. IN TODAY'S CHILEAN
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CONTEXT, FEW IF ANY OF THE POTENTIAL RECIPIENTS OF AID
MONEY FOR THIS PURPOSE WOULD BE DISINTERESTED POLITICALLY
IN THE FATE OF THIS REGIME AND WHAT SUCCEEDS IT. AC-
CORDING TO REFTEL, NONE OF THE FUNDS MAY BE USED DIRECTLY
OR INDIRECTLY TO INFLUENCE THE OUTCOME OF ANY ELECTION.
WE ASSUME THIS WAS INTENDED AND WILL BE INTERPRETED TO
MEAN AN ELECTION FOR OFFICE. BUT IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO

HAVE THE LAWYERS CHECK WHETHER THIS RESTRICTION ALSO APPLIES TO, E.G., A PLEBISCITE ON A NEW CONSTITUTION. SUCH A PLEBISCITE IS SCHEDULED FOR 1979 HERE. SOME OF THE ISSUES MAY WELL RELATE TO THE PROVISIONS THEREIN FOR PROTECTING POLITICAL AND CIVIL RIGHTS. CAN AID MONEY BE USED TO PROMOTE ONE OR ANOTHER SET OF ARGUMENTS IN THIS DEBATE?

3. UNLIKE, AT LEAST SOME OF THE OTHER COUNTRIES LISTED IN REFTTEL, CHILE NO LONGER HAS A BILATERAL US AID PROGRAM. THE GOC, THEREFORE, MAY BE PARTICULARLY UNHAPPY WITH THE USE OF AID FUNDS TO PROMOTE INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS WHICH, WITH SOME JUSTICE, IT WILL PERCEIVE AS BEING INSTRUMENTS OF THE POLITICAL OPPOSITION. EVEN IF THE GOC WERE NOT TO INTERPOSE ANY OBSTACLE OR OBJECTION TO THE ACTIVITIES BEING DEVELOPED BY MEEKER'S CENTER (THE IAF CONTINUES TO FUNCTION HERE), THOSE ACTIVITIES MIGHT WELL CONSTITUTE A SOURCE OF CONTINUING IRRITATION IN US/CHILEAN RELATIONS. WE HAVE NO PROBLEMS LIVING WITH IRRITANTS -- SO LONG AS US OBJECTIVES CAN BE AND ARE BEING ADVANCED -- BUT LOOK FORWARD TO DISCUSSING THE GENERAL SELECTION AND PROSPECTS WITH MEEKER.
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